

The continued decline in Cuban life on the treaty Communists and newer Castro-Guevara economy, despite a changed almost overnight. On the other hand, the supposed Castro-Khrushchev August 16, Havana radio re-agreement on Soviet aid and ported that the "Cuban Move- There are no signs of an Mr. Khrushchev's "advice"—as ment for Peace on the Sover- actual organized struggle or revealed by Mr. Castro upon entry of Peoples" had held a of any threat to Mr. Castro's

THE FEDERAL SPOTLIGHT

Weeks Bring Pay Raise Optimism And Plan for Omnibus Bill

By JOSEPH YOUNG
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Returning after a three-week vacation, this reporter finds Federal pay raise optimism running strong among employee leaders and their key supporters in Congress.

The House Democratic leadership reportedly has given its blessing to the House Civil Service Committee to wrap up in one omnibus bill pay raises for Federal classified and postal workers, members of Congress, political executives such as cabinet officers, agency heads, etc., and members of the judiciary.

Chairman Celler of the House Judiciary Committee, which normally would handle pay raise legislation for members of Congress and the judiciary, reportedly feels that his group will be much too occupied with civil rights legislation to have time for Congressional and judicial pay raises. However, Mr. Celler is reported agreeable to have the House Civil Service Committee handle this phase of the legislation along with the other pay raises. All this has the support of the House Democratic leadership.

Thus tied up in one package in an omnibus pay bill, with the support of the House Democratic leadership, the pay raise legislation's prospects continue to improve. This is because raises for any one group is dependent on that of the others. For example, Federal classified and postal employee raises depend to a large extent as to whether Congressional and Executive Act pay is raised.

On the Senate side, where today the Senate Civil Service Committee starts pay hearings, the situation will be handled somewhat differently. But the outlook there, too, is promising.

The Senate Civil Service Committee will handle Federal classified and postal employee pay raise legislation along with that of Executive Act salaries for top Government political appointees.

The Senate Judiciary Committee will handle pay raise legislation for members of Congress and the judiciary.

Here, too, this arrangement has the support of the Senate

bills to be merged on the Senate floor when they are respectively reported by the Senate Civil Service Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Pay raise enactment is by no means assured. An economy bloc in the Congress can be expected to fight it on the grounds that raises are ill-advised in a year when Congress is being asked to cut Federal income taxes.

But the fact that the House and Senate leadership apparently have lent their full support to the pay raise legislation for all segments of Government—including members of Congress and the judiciary—make prospects much brighter than they were a month or two ago.

CATCHING UP—Here are highlights of other employee developments during the past few weeks:

FORCED RESIGNATIONS—The Civil Service Commission is drafting a set of rules to guide its board of appeals in judging Federal employee appeals against forced resignations. It now has no rules on the subject.

The decision to issue regulations was prompted by a recent Federal district court decision in the Pawoczky case. The court voided the resignation of the employee who was given a resign-or-be-fired ultimatum with no time to consider his decision. It was the first time that a Federal court had ruled in favor of a Government employee who contended he had been forced to resign.

As a result, the CSC will issue specific rules for agencies to follow concerning personnel actions of an involuntary nature, with safeguards provided for employees against being pressured to resign against their will and with definite rules for agencies to adhere to. Attorney General Robert Kennedy has asked the CSC to adopt a uniform policy in this regard for protecting employees' rights.

NEW HEALTH PROGRAM—

The Government soon is expected to provide major new benefits for its employees.

benefits would be in addition to the Federal employee health insurance program.

The Budget Bureau is now drafting regulations that will give Federal agencies the go-ahead to offer employees many new health services on the ground that they will reduce absenteeism, increase productivity and benefit management.

It will provide for a wide range of employee and industrial health services, such as periodic physical exams, inoculations against contagious diseases, more modern and expanded health clinics, emergency treatment, etc.

Employees will be referred to private doctors for care and treatment and the agencies will check up to make sure those who need it go to them for treatment. Also, agencies occupying the same Federal buildings will be encouraged to pool their resources to set up better health clinics.

LEVEL OF COMPETENCE—John McCart, operations director of the AFL-CIO Government Employee Council, in testimony before the House Civil Service Committee has asked repeal of the controversial "level of competence" provision of last year's Federal pay reform law.

Testifying in favor of additional Government and postal employee pay raises, Mr. McCart emphasized that as part of the pay raise bill Congress should repeal the provision which requires Federal classified employees to maintain an "acceptable level of competence" in order to get their periodic within-grade pay raises. Mr. McCart urged the committee to substitute instead the previous requirement that a satisfactory performance rating—which, incidentally, is received by more than 99 per cent of all employees—be all that's necessary for an employee to receive a within-grade pay raise.

Mr. McCart stressed that under the new provision employees have no appeal rights. Furthermore, the Civil Service Commission, which slipped the provision into the last year's pay reform law without Congress even being aware of its existence, never has defined satisfactorily what "acceptable level of competence" is supposed to